

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

CANADA—ANNEXATION.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

More than twenty years have elapsed since the question of annexation was first openly mooted in the British Provinces of America. In 1849 several able and distinguished men, in various sections of Canada, avowed themselves to be in favor of such a measure, as the best mode of developing the resources of the country; and numerous writers sustained a movement which, at one time in that year, seemed likely to take a deep hold of the public mind on the north side of the great American-Canadian river. A manifesto was issued, signed by more than a thousand of the most prominent men in Montreal—then, as now, the commercial capital of Canada—in favor of a peaceful separation from the mother country, with a view to seeking admission into our great and prosperous Union. This proceeding alarmed to such a degree the pro-British party that extraordinary measures were adopted to stop the spread of principles so obnoxious to their tastes. Several hundred magistrates, militia officers, and others holding commissions under the Provincial Government, were summarily dismissed for having signed this document, or for speaking in public what were then esteemed to be treasonable words. These measures were accompanied by an assurance from Lord John, now Earl Russell, then Colonial Minister, that Her Majesty's Government would exert all its influence to procure reciprocal free trade between the provinces and the United States. The severity of the Colonial and the fair promises of the Imperial authorities had the effect of staying for a time the growing wish of the Canadians to enter the Union. This assurance was at length realized, through the able diplomacy of Lord Elgin, the Governor-General of Canada, by the consummation of the reciprocity treaty, which, having run its period of eleven years, was terminated on our part because of its obvious one-sidedness. The reciprocity scheme, as we all know, gave to our fishermen advantages with which they were content, but which, weighed against the quid pro quo given by us in return, were as dust in the balance. The same remark applies with equal force to the navigation of the St. Lawrence, which the cunning diplomat threw in, on the part of Canada, as a make-weight in the bargain.

What might have happened had our statesmen rejected the proposals of England on behalf of her colonies, proteges can only be a matter of conjecture. Protes of the earnest advocates of annexation, on both sides the line, are strongly of opinion that, but for the making of this hapless treaty, Canada would ere this have knocked at our door for admission. We are of a different opinion. Prior to our great civil war, our statesmen of all parties were too much engrossed in the great political and social problem of negro slavery to embark in outside questions, however important. This extreme indifference as to what so much concerned our neighbors' welfare, and apparently our own, was not shared by the Canadian annexationists most unaccountable. Many of these gentlemen, who, not unnaturally, sought sympathy and moral aid at Washington, returned home disgusted with the cold indifference with which they had been received by high officials and members of Congress. Since the renewal of the agitation of the question in Canada, consequent upon the termination of the treaty, similar complaints have been made. The reason for this apparent apathy is readily explained. Having rooted out slavery, and apparently the complicated system of checks and balances, compromise and bargains between the Northland and the South, and the East and the West, something akin to political chaos, for a time, ensued. Out of the discordant elements which remained we had to reconstruct the Union. This has occupied five years—a period so brief in the history of a nation, and considering what had to be done, so fraught with danger to constitutional government, that the future historian will marvel that such vast and salutary results have been accomplished in so brief a time. These mighty ends being now consummated, our Canadian neighbors need no longer complain of indifference on the part of our public men or of the press. The space occupied by President Grant, in his late message, in discussing Canadian questions, affords satisfactory evidence that the time has come for the consideration of the subject, with a view to its early and final solution. Whether the suggestions made by the President for a quasi suspension of commercial intercourse between the two countries (for that is what it amounts to) in retaliation for wrongs inflicted on a few fishermen are feasible or wise, they are certain to be attended with one good result. He has fairly opened the question, and the universal attention thus drawn to it will convince our neighbors that the period of indifference has at length given place to one of careful inquiry—the certain precursor of more decided action.

On one point, at least, our public men of all parties are at present agreed, viz., that the Canadians must never hope for a renewal of the defunct Reciprocity treaty. If they are not yet prepared to lay aside old and useless sentimentalities, they must, if they desire anything short of annexation, come to us with a proposal to adopt our commercial system—our tariff, in almost all respects, the rest of the world—England included. That tariff will afford the Canadians advantages which a large party here claim for it in reference to our own national industries. Canada, like this country, has its protectionist party; and this party claims that Canada possesses great facilities, in the shape of cheap labor, inexhaustible water-power, and abundance of raw material, for setting up as a manufacturing country. Only one thing they lack: a market in which to sell their surplus fabrics. It is absolutely certain that their best market, outside the provinces, will be our almost illimitable agricultural States lying south and west of the provinces. In these vast and growing markets they will in fact become competitors with our Eastern manufacturers. A proposition, therefore, for a new treaty to regulate trade between the two countries, to be acceptable to any class in this country, must embrace not only this marked discrimination against transatlantic merchandise and produce, but must include a scheme for the free exchange of every article, the produce or manufacture of the respective countries. Furthermore, such a scheme must comprehend entire reciprocity in the fisheries and the navigable waters, both natural and artificial, of the two countries. Now, as no such treaty can be negotiated except by England or with her consent, so long as the Dominion clings to the shadow of British connection, it will be impossible for Canada to come to us

with such a proposal. However much Great Britain may desire to be rid of the complications growing out of the divergent interests of her overgrown North American colonies, it can scarcely be expected that she will absolutely cut them adrift, so long as they cling to her with childish pertinacity; or that, on the other hand, she will consent to their discriminating, in their legislation or by treaty, in our favor.

Canada, in her present undecided and hesitating position between colonial tutelage and national independence, leaves our statesmen in some doubt as to the best policy to be pursued to promote the growing ambition of her people to become part and parcel of this country. Whatever intermediate stages the Canadian question is destined to undergo, we speak the universal sentiment of this country when we express our conviction that the ultimate goal is annexation. Whether this end is to be reached by direct diplomacy, such as led to the withdrawal of the French from Mexico, or by the adoption of measures leading indirectly thereto, is a question that we may soon have to determine. We rather like the idea of going directly at the main question, of terminating the reign of British power on this continent. Tell England the time has come for her to withdraw from American soil all pretense of military supremacy, and she will not be long in making up her mind to accept what her statesmen have long contemplated as an inevitable conclusion. Canada, left to herself, will rapidly gravitate to our system. We look to the free navigation of the St. Lawrence and its cañals—the latter much enlarged—for an additional outlet for our enormous and continually increasing Western products. In arranging the terms of annexation, we can afford to throw in several millions of dollars as a set-off in favor of Canada for surrendering her customs revenue. This will enable her to enter into a stipulation to enlarge her canals so as to permit ocean steamers, such as now visit Montreal, Chicago, and the head of Lake Superior. What must be the advantages of such a never-failing source of trade to Canada, as well as the opening of new routes to market to the States, it is difficult to predict. Viewing the question in all its bearings, it is by far the most important before the country; and it must be grasped with no faltering hand. President Grant doubtless regards it as the best live issue on which to go to the country for re-election. The annexation of Canada, by peaceable means, is the problem to be solved; and those who are now struggling in all sections of the Dominion to build up a party to effect that object have no valid cause to complain of coldness or indifference on the part of American statesmen.

THE CAPTURE OF FORT AVRON.

From the N. Y. Times.

Yielding, probably, as much to the pressure of public opinion in Germany as to considerations of military necessity, the first step in the bombardment of Paris has been completed. It is understood that the great strategical leader of the German forces has, from the first, been opposed to any attempt to reduce Paris by shot and shell. The true master of the military art is never prodigal of human life. General von Moltke has doubtless a very clear perception of what it will cost to carry Paris by storm, and the magnitude of the task may fairly be guessed at from the length of time he has refrained from attempting it. The decided opinions of Bismarck and Von Roon, both of whom are said to have advocated more active measures, he has been able to overrule, and the growing discontent of Germany—a Germany that has been giving freely of her very life-blood to have France at her feet—has proved too powerful for him. Away in fatherland, he has found his call for levy after levy freely responded to. The Landwehr came ready to arms, and after doing their duty unflinchingly to the defense of Germany was their allotted duty, and now there are drafts from the Landsturm coming forward, of fathers and heads of families, the bread-winners of a people who at heart love peace, and yet there is no murmur heard at the stern requirements of war. Only the people have got it into their heads that their Generals are showing a foolish clemency in sparing the stubborn and unexpectedly heroic populace behind the walls of Paris, and have got tired of hearing how the ranks of their brethren got thinned, as after a sortie comes on behind the still unshaken forts, and after doing their bloody work retreat safely to the same covert again. If luxurious and pampered Paris can live for weeks upon horseflesh, how much longer may it still hold out upon the stores of bread and wine that are said to be so ample? If the work is to be done, let it be done quickly, reason the people across the Rhine. The ravages of disease and the inclemency of the weather, between them, will shortly cost as many lives as might have effected a lodgment in the outer circle of the Parisian forts.

Fort Avron may serve as a strong offensive position to the Germans, or it may prove more difficult to hold than it has been to take. Its possession will certainly form a check upon sorties from the northeast which have hitherto been so successful. If there is heavy enough artillery, as we have every reason to believe to be the case, ready to be mounted upon it, the fall of Rosny, situated on the opposite eminence, about two miles nearer Paris, is only a question of days and then the suburb of Montreuil will soon be a mass of ruins, and the charmed circle of the outer enceinte will be broken. On the other hand, the French have occupied the position which they cannot abandon without great loss of prestige, and on which the French, moving as they do round a much smaller circle, and having all the facilities of a railroad round the city at their command, can at any time direct an enormous weight of men and metal. Situated not only within easy range of Fort Rosny, but also of Romainville and Fontenay, the redoubt erected in the grounds of the Chateau Avron may turn out a very costly acquisition. Either way its capture marks a new phase of the siege of Paris, and probably forms the prelude to a more sanguinary struggle than any of those that have yet occurred for the possession of the capital of France.

THE SAN DOMINGO SENATORS.

From the N. Y. World.

The votes in the San Domingo debate put in a very strong light the peculiarly rotten composition of the Senate of the United States. There are in all seventy-four seats—admitting, to avoid confusion, all the so-called States to be States—in this body, and setting aside the three vacancies, we find that out of the seventy-one gentlemen who now make up the Senate of the United States there are not less than twenty-six of whom it is a mild word to say that they are surreptitious. Were every member in his seat and the San Domingo or any other treaty to come up, these surreptitious Senators would so far hold the balance of power—their numbers exceeding one-third of the Senate—that there

could be no ratification unless they felt disposed to concede one. Their power is like that possessed by the holder of a casting vote, or, in other words, when they speak the whole body gives its voice. And with this power in a full Senate their strength is even more available in the ordinary run of legislation. The genuine Senators are apt to have business of their own to attend to, and they must visit home, arrange re-elections, attend to their banks, mills, fortunes, etc.—but the surreptitious Senator is ever in his seat. He cannot be re-elected, for the reign of fraud and force which seated him is drawing to its close; he has no liking for his home, for the ungody there would scoff at the adventurer who left his Northern city to follow the army, coming back in the pinchbeck magnificence of a Southern Senator, and as for business, our friend can fetch his happiest strokes when sitting in his curule chair. Let the session, therefore, be long as it will, the twenty-six surreptitious Senators are to be found helping to make up the quorum, and ready at all times for business in the way of a vote. To exemplify this, we find that the hottest debate and the most significant vote of this session were rendered possible by the gentry of whom we speak—the San Domingo debate and vote being, of course, meant. There being seventy-one members, thirty-six are needed for a quorum, and on this occasion forty-three, or forty more than enough, were present. Out of this number fourteen, however, were putative Senators; and striking them out in fact, as law and right and truth always strike them, we find that there were but twenty-six Senators present, or ten less than a bare quorum. Coming to the vote, fourteen out of the thirty-one passing the resolution to appoint the roving commission were the fourteen just mentioned, leaving but seventeen genuine Senators acting upon a solemn and important declaration, when, by the Constitution of the United States, there should have been at least double that number. Surreptitious members make the quorum; surreptitious members make the vote; and a vote and a quorum make a law. Law rules us all; and it is monstrous, shameful, an intolerable evil, that the Senate of the United States, which has the peculiar prerogative of making a law higher than the House can make and only inferior to the Constitution itself, should be composed as it now is. The evil has been long existent, but never so fully evidenced perhaps as in this San Domingo case.

REFORMED RAKES.

From the Baltimore American.

Washington society is at present in great commotion over a scandal in high life, which is the subject of very general comment. Less than a year ago a Democratic member of the House of Representatives was married to the daughter of a distinguished Senator. She was a lady of great intelligence and marked personal attractions, surrounded by all the enjoyments that wealth and social position could command. The husband, when sober, is said to be a gentleman of fine deportment and pleasing manners, but, like many young members of Congress, was given to strong drink. The parents of the bride, on this ground, earnestly opposed the marriage, but finally yielded to the persistence of the parties and the promises of reformation. She doubtless thought, as many of the sisterhood have confidently believed before her, that she would be able to reform and make a sober man of her lover when he should become her husband. The marriage finally took place, and the event was the absorbing theme of conversation in fashionable and political circles. They had settled down into the quiet routine of married life, and it was hoped that the bright anticipations of the bride had not been disappointed. Some weeks since, however, the husband returned to his room at Willard's Hotel in a state of beastly intoxication, and the inmates of the house were aroused by the screams of the wife, who was being beaten by him in the most shameful manner. Whether this was but a culmination of a series of similar events of less violence is not known, but it is a sad denouement of that ought to have been a happy marriage.

There is nothing new, however, and nothing strange in the result of this attempt to reform a drunken lover. The sooner the ladies come to the conclusion that a drunkard cannot be permanently reformed, the better it will be for their own happiness and the happiness of all that are near and dear to them. That there are occasional instances of reformation is undoubted, but they are so rare that no hope can be based on reform in any given case. Sooner or later there will be a relapse, and as a general thing the latter end of such men is worse than the first. Ten years of steady sobriety have given no guarantee of permanent cure of the disease—for disease it is, as much as consumption or insanity. We have heard much of "reformed rakes" and "sowing wild oats in youth," but such terms must be regarded as mere poetical similes, without sound or meaning. Those who have sowed their wild oats will be sure to harvest them, to the sorrow of wives and children; and as to a "reformed rake," it is a misnomer, having no existence except in the fancy and hope of a love-stricken damsel.

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1829. CHARTER PERPETUAL 1870. Franklin Fire Insurance Company OF PHILADELPHIA. Office, Nos. 435 and 437 CHESTNUT ST. Assets Aug. 1, '70 \$3,009,888'24

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FIRE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED MARCH 17, 1850. OFFICE, No. 34 NORTH FIFTH STREET.

FAME INSURANCE COMPANY No. 509 CHESTNUT STREET. INCORPORATED 1856. CHARTER PERPETUAL. CAPITAL \$200,000.

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STATEMENT OF THE ASSETS. First Mortgages on City Property \$766,450 United States Government and other Loan Bonds 1,122,846 Railroad, Bank and Canal Stocks 55,708 Cash in Bank and Office 947,990 Loans on Collateral Security 32,065 Notes Receivable, mostly Marine Premiums 821,944

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